

November 2, 2013 Notes

Sierra Adare-Tasiwoopa ápi's talk tonight, *entitled Communicating Cultural Invisibility in Children's Literature*", was so timely scheduled that she focused on the stereotypes in children's books on the topic of the first Thanksgiving. Her talk confirmed my belief that a child's socialization and cultural education begins in reading children's books. I have been using children's literature to best represent who the Native Americans were in the history of the United States and who they are today. Her talk really encourages me to continue using what I have been using in the teacher education pedagogy courses.

A Cherokee, Adare- Tasiwoopa ápi has focused her research on stereotyping throughout American history. Her work on the subject of children's books and their impact on the cultural development of children has been published over the past several decades.

The purpose of her study is to deconstruct stereotypes and myths about the First Thanksgiving and the Native Americans in general.

"Stories about indigenous peoples and cultures remain popular throughout the history of children's literature," Adare-Tasiwoopa ápi said. "However, since the civil rights movement parents and educators have raised concerns about the perpetuation of damaging stereotypical depictions and inaccurate depiction of traditional gender roles more in line with Euro-western social norms than indigenous cultures. Calls for greater accuracy and authentic inclusion have met with unexpected resistance and inequity in representation, despite indigenous authors entering into the realm of publishing children's books."

The presentation examined indigenous storylines and imagery in selected historical and contemporary children's books written by indigenous and non-indigenous authors. Adare-Tasiwoopa ápi will make, as proposed by Edward Said, a comparative close reading against the grain of authors and illustrators' handling of both text and visuals, as well as the intended

audience, in order to expose areas of stories where the Indigenous perspective or participation has been erased or “sanitized.”

This contrastive analysis also uses Debbie Reese’s indigenizing methodology in exploring ways indigenous themes, characters and cultures can be (re)envisioned in children’s literature. Such a restoration would serve to advance children’s knowledge of diverse cultures and enhance social justice.

Source:

<http://www2.cortland.edu/news/detail.dot?id=28f5f181-d148-4fd9-b5a5-01e4a385eb07>